

TOWN OF DAVIE

OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Middaugh, Town Administrator

FROM: Will Allen, Programs Administrator

DATE: May 12, 2000

SUBJECT: Town of Davie Transit System

The Town Council directed that the staff obtain information about the potential for providing a transportation system to serve the Town of Davie. Based on this direction the Town has obtained information from several communities (Margate, Pembroke Pines, Coconut Creek and Cooper City) which are providing or are preparing to provide local transit service within their municipalities. Representatives of Broward County Transit were particularly helpful in providing information about potential routes and the costs of providing such service. Information will be presented at the May 17, 2000 Town Council meeting to show potential routes that the Town Council may want to consider as well as potential costs and how those costs could be recovered, at least partially. The feedback from this meeting will provide direction on whether a transit system should be pursued and at what level. The type of service and level of service is a policy decision of Town Council. Suggestions of potential options and the resulting costs follow and can be discussed more fully at the meeting. This is a preliminary discussion and certainly is open for alteration.

A base map provided by Development Services Department will be displayed at the Town Council meeting. This map was the beginning point for identifying where the needs for transit are located. The purpose of the transit system is to provide the ability for the people of Davie an alternative to automobiles to be able to access activity centers that they may need or want to reach. The base map identifies areas of concentrations of population density as well as potential points of interest or activity nodes. The idea is to link as many of these nodes as possible. The areas attempted to be linked include:

- Highly populated areas including mobile home parks
- CDBG target areas
- Senior citizen area

- Park and recreation facilities
- Shopping- particularly food shopping
- Health Facilities
- Colleges
- Cultural Centers
- Government Centers
- Links to Broward County Transit routes

A major consideration when constructing transit routes is that the system must be reliable. A person must be confident that the bus will be running and that there is a maximum waiting time at each stop. The consensus of all of the communities who are now providing transit is the maximum time in which a stop served by a route must not exceed a one hour time period. One of the unique features and challenges about Davie is its geographic size. Davie is so large that it makes it difficult to compare with other communities. The size and the lower density make it more difficult to provide service in a timely and cost effective manner. For example, Margate has an excellent transit system with four bus routes but that city has 50,000 people in a 9 square mile area.

Based on linking the various types of areas to be served, a preliminary routing has been suggested. Two primary routes are suggested which link together at Pine Island Park. A route summary for each, an east route and a west route are attached. The route chart shows the approximate length of each route, the time it is estimated to complete the route and the key destinations on the route. For each route it is suggested that there be two buses operating at a time to keep the waiting time at stops at acceptable levels of one hour or less. The hours of operation would be 7:00 a.m to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The potential eastern route covers approximately a 20 mile route which can be covered in approximately 90 minutes. With two buses there would be 45 minutes to an hour between buses at any one stop. This route links with the BCT system at several locations giving an opportunity to reach additional regional sites. It traverses a number of food shopping locations, the SFEC area, Town Hall, Nova Health Center, cultural facilities, park and recreation facilities, and a number of densely populated neighborhoods including senior citizen concentrations as well as two of the three CDBG target areas. It is suggested that this route would be the most viable because it is more dense and would serve a greater concentration of persons who would be more in need of having transit service. It should be noted that not all areas of the community would be served by such a transit route. The buses cannot go up and down each street and still be considered timely and reliable not to mention affordable. Once again, the routing is only preliminary and can be changed after additional review. Expansion of a route can be accomplished but affects the time of the route and may be more expensive.

The potential western route covers a much less densely populated area. When

looking at this route there are some areas where a bus linking the various nodes could make some excellent travel time as there is very little potential for bus ridership. The proposed route does link the periphery of the western area and enable a resident to go to both the eastern and western portions of Davie. It links to the BCT route along State Road 84 and to existing and proposed facilities in western Davie. Among the nodes which are linked are the future Boys and Girls Club as well as the future library along State Road 84. It also connects to recreational facilities such as Robbins Lodge and connects to the eastern route at Pine Island Park. This route is significantly longer in distance but there are some areas in which a bus should be able to pick up time due to distance between stops and the bus should move at a greater speed. It is estimated that two buses could make the loop within one hour. This area would probably not use the transit system as often. It could be initiated at a later date if the Town Council wanted to phase in a system and fund a system incrementally. In order to serve the entire community then both the routes would need to be budgeted.

How much does a system cost to implement? This depends on the number and length of routes, the number of buses to service the routes, the days and times of operation. A cost estimate can be given for the routes listed above. Costs for a smaller or larger system can be estimated based on these estimates.

Broward County Transit will provide the vehicles at no cost to a municipality so long as the transit system meets certain requirements. These requirements include linkages to the BCT routes, operating a minimum of 40 hours per week on a fixed route basis, and not be duplicative of county bus service. There are a number of other conditions such as having to maintain the bus and hiring qualified drivers, meeting ADA requirements and maintaining records of mileage and ridership on a daily basis. The length of a contract with BCT is usually three years. Typically the bus provided is a 16 passenger diesel vehicle. Other types of vehicles can be negotiated including larger 22 passenger mini-buses if demand for riders can be shown. Alternative fuel vehicles can even be obtained. These alternatives are usually available after some experience with a system has been gained.

BCT will also assist in payment of operating costs. Based on the existing gas tax, BCT will provide \$20,000 per vehicle for operating a vehicle. If the additional one cent gas tax is approved the amount is expected to increase to \$40,000 per bus.

The cost to operate each bus is estimated to be \$75,000 per bus. This is based on the experience of other communities and the SFEC. The cost of operations include personnel including bus drivers and support staff to dispatch, take calls and monitor the system. Also included are costs to fuel the bus and maintenance costs such as parts and labor, insurance, etc. The function of operating the bus system can be done in-house or can be done through a contractor such as the SFEC has done. One advantage of a contract is that a firm which provides bus service can be required to provide a substitute bus should a bus be out of service for repairs or maintenance.

Based on a system which operates four buses the annual costs of operation would be approximately \$300,000. Based on the current gas tax BCT would provide \$80,000 per year for operating the four buses reducing the cost per bus to \$55,000 or a total of \$220,000. If the additional one cent gas tax is enacted then an additional \$20,000 per bus would be available making the cost of operation \$35,000 or \$140,000 for four buses. There is a possibility that CDBG funds could be used to help fund transportation services so long as the funding benefits low/moderate income families and individuals. The public hearings have not yet been held on CDBG funding but the staff recommendation is to match County funds up to \$50,000. If this were to occur then the direct Town cost for operating the four buses would be reduced to \$90,000 or \$22,500 per bus. The range for Town costs to operate four buses ranges from \$90,000 to \$220,000. Fares can be charged to help defray the cost of operating the system. No fee is usually charged at the inception of the system to try to develop ridership. A nominal fee such as \$.25 may be charged after that period of six months or so. Some communities do not charge a fee but a quarter is the norm.

The information provided is for a fixed transit system. This type of system has a route with fixed stops on a regular basis. The Town can also explore alternative methods of transportation such as a demand/response system. In this type of system a resident can call for an appointment and be picked up at home, taken to a destination and returned home. Such a system is available at the County level for paratransit. A person has to meet certain handicap requirements to be eligible. There are options for providing such service to seniors for shopping or medical trips. Typically such a system can be very expensive. This would be particularly true in Davie due to our 40 square miles of area. This is a different concept than transit and if directed staff can explore costs of this option.

A representative of BCT will be at the meeting and can answer questions about transit. They have been extremely helpful in providing information and advice about a route. They feel the eastern route to be very viable. The western route is somewhat sparsely populated except for the State Road 84 corridor.

**ROUTE INFORMATION
PROPOSED EASTERN ROUTE**

Route Distance:	21 miles
Route Travel Time:	90 minutes
Buses Covering Route:	2 (plus spare)
Primary Paths:	Davie Road Stirling Road Orange Drive Nova Drive College Avenue SW 30th Street University Drive Pine Island Road
Key Destinations:	BCT Routes (multiple connections) Pine Island Park- Swimming Pool & Meeting
Rooms	New multi-purpose Building Davie /Cooper City Library Davie Shopping Center (Publix) David Posnack JCC Ehlinger & El Jardin Apartments Carriage Hills Plaza (Winn Dixie) Town Hall Potter Park Downtown Davie Silver Oaks Mobile Home Park College Campus- Bailey Hall New Library (Nova Campus) Nova Health Center

**ROUTE INFORMATION
PROPOSED WESTERN ROUTE**

Route Distance:	32 miles
Route Travel Time:	120 minutes
Buses Covering Route:	2 (plus spare)
Primary Paths:	Orange Drive Griffin Road Volunteer Road Dykes Road State Road 84 Pine Island Road
Key Destinations:	BCT Routes (multiple connections) Pine Island Park- Swimming Pool & Meeting
Rooms	New multi-purpose Building Robbins Lodge Wal Mart (Connection to Cooper City) Flamingo Gardens Regency Square (Publix) Ivanhoe Community Center Publix (Sheridan & Dykes) Muvico Winn Dixie (Griffin & Dykes) Shenandoah Square (Publix) Orange Park CommunityCenter Western High School New Boys and Girls Club Post Office Future Library- 84 & Scarborough Police & Fire Station Pine Island Plaza (Publix)